

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A combination energy absorption and environmental insulating barrier incorporated into a vehicle door trim panel assembly, comprising:

a thermoformed shell having an exterior facing surface and an opposite recessed interior facing surface;

a three-dimensional structural component having a specified length, width and thickness and which is configured to substantially seat against said recessed interior facing surface of said shell, said structural component being constructed of a durable plasticized and expanded foam material, a dimensional misalignment tolerancing established between said opposing facing surfaces of said thermoformed shell and said expanded structural component;

interengaging portions being established between said opposing surfaces of said shell and structural component and which compensate for misalignments existing therebetween due to tolerancing variances associated with a selected outer facing surface of said structural component and an opposing and inner facing surface of said outer shell; and

an exposed facing surface of said structural component securing against an inner associated surface of a vehicle door.

2. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 1, said thermoformed shell being constructed of an acetyl butyl styrene material.

3. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 1, further comprising a decorative covering applied against said exterior facing surface of said thermoformed shell.

4. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 3, said decorative covering comprising at least a vinyl or leather material.

Claims 5-7 (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The trim panel assembly as described in claim [[7]] 1, said interengaging portions further comprising at least one of Velcro® portions, spring clips [[or]] and other types of adjustable fasteners.

9. (Currently Amended) The trim panel assembly as described in claim [[7]] 1, further comprising at least one deflectable and in-molded fastener clip associated with said exposed facing surface of said expanded structural component and which engages through a proximately located aperture in the vehicle door.

10. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 9, said structural insert having a specified shape and size and exhibiting properties selected from the group including moisture imperviousness, acoustical insulation and impact resistance.

11. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 1, further comprising said structural component exhibiting a first three-dimensional exterior configured surface seating against said thermoformed shell, said exposed facing surface further comprising a second three-dimensional and exterior configured surface approximating that of the inner surface of the vehicle door.

12. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 10, further comprising said three-dimensional structural component being constructed of an energy absorbing structural foam.

13. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 12, further comprising said structural component being constructed of at least one of a urethane and an impact resistant styrene.

14. (Currently Amended) A combination energy absorption and environmental insulating barrier incorporated into a vehicle door trim panel assembly, comprising:

a thermoformed and hardened shell having an exterior facing surface and an opposite recessed interior facing surface;

a three-dimensional structural component constructed of a durable plasticized and expanded foam material and exhibiting the properties of moisture imperviousness and impact resistance, said structural component having a specified length, width and thickness and which is configured to substantially seat against said recessed interior facing surface of said shell, a dimensional misalignment tolerancing being established between said opposing facing surfaces of said thermoformed shell and said expanded structural component due to tolerancing variances associated with a selected outer facing surface of said structural component and an opposing and inner facing surface of said outer shell; and

an exposed facing surface of said structural component securing against an inner associated surface of a vehicle door.

15. (Currently Amended) A combination energy absorption and environmental insulating barrier incorporated into a vehicle door trim panel assembly, comprising:

a thermoformed and hardened shell having an exterior facing surface and an opposite recessed interior facing surface, a decorative covering being applied against an exposed facing surface of said shell;

a three-dimensional structural component constructed of a durable plasticized and expanded foam material and exhibiting the properties of moisture imperviousness, acoustical insulation and impact resistance, said structural component having a specified length, width and thickness and which is configured to substantially seat against said recessed interior facing surface of said shell, a dimensional misalignment tolerancing being established between said opposing facing surfaces of said thermoformed shell and said expanded structural component, interengaging portions being established between said opposing surfaces of said shell and said structural component and facilitating misalignment due to tolerancing variances associated with ~~said expanded foam component~~ a selected outer facing surface of said structural component and an opposing and inner facing surface of said outer shell; and

an exposed facing surface of said structural component including at least one deflectable and in-molded fastener clip for engaging through a proximately located aperture in a vehicle door to secure in place the trim panel assembly.

16. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and environmental insulating barrier incorporated into a vehicle door assembly, comprising:

a three-dimensional and expanded structural component having a specified length, width and thickness and which is configured to substantially seat within a recessed cavity associated with the vehicle door; and

a dimensional misalignment tolerancing established between opposing faces associated with the door and said expanded structural component due to variances associated with a selected outer facing surface of said structural component and an opposing and inner facing surface of said outer shell.

17. (Currently Amended) A combination energy absorption and environmental insulating barrier incorporated into a vehicle door trim panel assembly, comprising:

a thermoformed shell having an exterior facing surface and an opposite recessed interior facing surface;

a three-dimensional structural component having a specified length, width and thickness and which is configured to substantially seat against said recessed interior facing surface of said shell despite a degree of misalignment existing between a selected outer facing and three-dimensional surface of the structural component and an opposing and inner facing surface of the shell; and

a location of at least said thermoformed shell securing against an exposed surface of a vehicle door.

18. (Original) The trim panel assembly as described in claim 17, said thermoformed shell further comprising at least one extending lip portion, in surface contact with the vehicle door surface, and through which is engaged a fastener.